THE POLYNESIAN.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT HONOLULU, O'AHU, SANDWICH ISLANDS.

J. J. JARVES, Editor.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1840.

Vol. 1.—No. 2.

Terms of the POLYNESIAN.

SUBSCRIPTION. Eight Dollars per annum, payable in advance; half year, Five Dollars; quarter, Three Dollars; single copies, 25 cents.

ADVERTISING. $2, 25 for three insertions of one square; forty cents for each continuance; more than a half and less than a square, $1, 75 for first three insertions, and 30 cents for each after insertion. Half a square, $1, 25 for first three insertions, and 20 cents for each succeeding insertion.

Terms of yearly advertising made known on application to the editor.

COMMUNICATED.

A STORM AT SEA.

By REV. FITCH W. TAYLOR, Chaplain, U. S. N

Concluded from No. 1.

All hands were called. Even the sick were summoned from their hammocks. On a lee-shore no officer would venture the ship within twenty fathoms, in so wild a blow; and the tide and the gale were sweeping her each moment nearer the invisible land, now impossible to be seen through the whirling mists, a hundred lengths of the ship in the distance. Our sails, then, seemed our only salvation, and yet they had been riven to a useless mass of parcelling; while our anchors were the last resort. New topsails therefore were bent by the already far-spent and nearly exhausted crew, while the Commodore, in a consultation with three of his principal officers, decided that the anchors should not be let go so long as twenty fathoms swept beneath us. And no sails could stand in such a gale, to beat off from the shore; and no ship could tack in such a sea; and no anchors, it was believed, could hold a ship driven by such a commotion of the sea; or, if the anchors held, the ship must swamp beneath the surge as it broke in its sweep above the decks, and the masts without a remedy go by the board. And yet, the ship in her drift of another fifteen minutes, might strike; and if the gale continued but a few hours longer and the wind held its point where it was, certainly must strike on rock, or reef, or sand, and in either case, in such a swell, those who best knew the dangers would cherish least the hope of rescue to a single soul of the frigate's crew.

Was it a miracle? It served us the same as if the Almighty had extended his arm from the cloud and pointed to the winds, *thither to change their course!* The rain in its last torrents seemed to have pressed down the sea to the ocean's level by the weight of the cataracts that fell in their last effort. A lull came in a moment more. The crew, in their exhaustion, and for hours drenched and without sustenance — had but just completed the bending of the sails to supply the canvass riven in the gale, when the wind as if by enchantment came out from another quarter, and in a moment more fell upon our courses and topsails which had been braced around as the ship wore, and on another tack lay several points farther from the land. With the change of wind came a lifting of the mists, and under our lee, within, four hours more drift of the gale, lay the high bluffs of an iron bound coast; from which, in twelve hours more of freshening and favorable breezes, we parted beyond solicitude or care.

For myself, I seldom experience much the emotion of fear in circumstances of danger, and in this instance could but slightly estimate the critical cricumstances of the ship compared with those who had made many voyages and encountered many dangers, but few greater than the late one of the gale which is past. No sign of alarm marked the energetic action of the officers and the unwearied efforts of the men, while a gravity becoming the circumstances of the ship prevailed.

On the succeeding sabbath, the attentive solemnity at our usual services indicated that there was no heart present that did not respond to the sentiment of the prayer, which a sincere emotion of gratitude in my own heart, at least, had dictated, for the coming thanksgiving of the day.

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For the Polynesian.

PASSAGE

THROUGH THE STRAITS OF MAGELLAN—

In the Schooner Morse of Boston — 98 *tons (Late the United States Revenue Cutter Crawford.)*

At 1 P. M. on the 19th, July, 1839, we made Cape Virgin, the northern point of the eastern entrance to Magellan Straits. The Patagonian shore for a considerable distance, was also in view. The land hereabouts is of moderate height and of barren aspect. The weather was clear and pleasant; Thermometer 43°. At half past four we were abreast of Cape Virgin, and in six fathoms of water. The wind blowing out of the Straits obliged us to make several tacks before reaching an anchorage. At midnight came-to in ten fathoms water about half way between Point Dungeness and mount Dinero and one and a half miles from the shore. Getting underweigh at 8 A. M. the next morning we plied to windward—assisted in some degree by a favorable tide. The flood sets to the westward—the ebb to the eastward, but the tides run with but little strength. High water. 4h. 56m. before the moon's passage of meridian. At 1. P. M. July 10, we anchored a little to the eastward of mount Dinero about two miles off shore; our wood and water, being almost entirely exhausted I landed on the shore to look for a supply, and taking a fowling piece and ammunition, with hope of obtaining some kind of game to serve us a fresh mess—having been living for sometime on *salt junk and bread*—poor Jack's Ambrosia—food preferred by him to roast turkey and plumb pudding, but to my "organ of taste" not so desirable. We found upon the beach, plenty of low scrubby bushes, that burnt well; of water there was none. Having procured a boat load of wood and a few beach birds, we were about preparing to return on board, when I caught sight of an Indian on horseback, riding rapidly through some small sand hills, and approaching towards us. We at first thought he might be foremost of a large party of Indians, who were about to make an attack upon us. However as retreat was useless, we boldly faced him. His from was gigantic—measuring about six feet three or four inches, and of the most athletic proportions—his hair was tied up in a club—his covering was nothing more than a robe of Gunauco skins [a kind of deer,] thrown over his shoulders. The horse he rode was very small and ill looking—but probably tough and hardy. Followed by three ugly looking dogs, the Indian rode up to us without betraying the least diffidence or fear. He saluted us in Spanish —"Buenos Tardes." To which I replied in the same language and offered him my hand—which he shook heartily. He informed us in broken Spanish and English that he belonged to a tribe of Indians of whom a person he called "St. Johns," was the chief—that they resided at a place near Cape Possession, about five miles to the westward of us. Having seen our vessel, the chief had despatched him off, to acquaint us of his desire to trade for tobacco, arms and ammunition —offering to give us in exchange furs and skins, of which they had five different kinds. He named them over—but land otters, fox and lions skin's were the only kinds whose names we could recognize or understand. He said, too, that they had plenty of Gunauco meat, which they would gladly dispose of for cigars or tobacco. Our visiter requested permission to accompany us on board to pass the night—giving us to understand that his whole tribe would arrive by next morning, and be ready to trade. Consenting to the wishes of our Indian friend, we took him into the boat;—while on the passage to the vessel, I fired at and killed a gull, which was swimming upon the water at a considerable distance from us. This feat seemed to excite great astonishment in him. He gave one of those low, deep and expressive "*humphs,*" which Indians are *sometimes* guilty of when taken by surprise or their admiration particularly excited. Arrived on board, I offered him supper; salt junk he could not fancy, but tea and bread seemed to be liked particularly well. Some cigars and manufactured tobacco were then presented to him, which he gladly accepted, and immediately commenced smoking.

At 8 the next morning we got under weigh; stood for Cape Possession. Soon after this we discovered the tribe of Indians all mounted on horseback, riding along the beach towards the place opposite the anchorage just left. As soon as we were discovered, they wheeled round and continued to advance along the shore parallel to us, and making signs the while, of their wishes for us to anchor. The favorable slant of wind however forbid us gratifying them.

We sailed along thus for sometime, and being not more than a mile from the shore, we had a distinct view of these children of nature; men of whom we had read so much in the journals of the early voyagers to this wild and inhospitable region—men whom Magellan called *Giants.* There were about eighty persons;—each one mounted on horseback, and the whole party followed by about three hundred barking and yelping dogs. We could distinguish no women in the party, though our Indian passenger said there were several. The chief "St. John," was pointed out to us. He, as well as the generality of the persons composing his tribe, appeared to be of rather large stature, and stout framed—but I saw no *giants* or any one except our passenger approaching to the size inferred by that name. The race of the Patagoinans must have degenerated in size very much since the days of the early Spanish navigators, or else the writers must have told a "*romance.*"

Having arrived abreast of Cape Possession, and the favorable slant of wind still continuing, I judged it most prudent to land our Indian and to continue our progress through the Straits without loss of time. Standing with the vessel close in to the shore, the Indian was put into the boat. The second mate with two men being in her armed and sent under strict charge not to land—it being an object with me not to put ourselves needlessly into the power of the Indians, there being no inducement of sufficient magnitude to justify it. The disposition of these Indians had certainly appeared friendly, but as treachery is characteristic of all uncivilized people, I thought it well to be upon our guard. and prepared to operate against any attempts which they might make upon our lives or the safety of the vessel.

To be continued.